

ACSP:



BY SHELLY FOY

Who, What, Why, Where, When and How

These are some of the most common questions asked about the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ACSP). I thought they might help motivate some of you to get more involved.

In future issues of the *FLORIDA GREEN*, we will address other questions you may have about the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. Send your questions to:

USGA Green Section
P.O. Box 1087
Hobe Sound, FL 33475
Fax: 561-546-4653.

Question: My time is so limited. I want to get involved, I just can't seem to find the time. Any suggestions?

Answer: One of the first things you will do when you get involved with the ACSP is form a Resource Committee. This committee is just that, a resource for you to use. It can be made up of staff, golfers, board members, club officials, community persons such as Native Plant Society members, local Audubon members, a local utility company representative, a person from your solid waste authority, cooperative extension service or our local fish and wildlife agency just to name a few. Let your Resource Committee do their part by helping you out with anything from filling out the Resource Inventory, to initiating projects, locating sources, etc. No where in the program does it say that the golf course superintendent has to do all the work.

Another idea is to have your assistant superintendent or secretary handle the paperwork of the program. These are two people who are also fairly knowledgeable about the golf course and its operations. They could arrange meetings and schedule projects for you.

Don't be afraid to delegate portions of this program! The key to success is when you share the program with others. After all, one of the main things you want to do is to educate people about the environmental benefits of the golf course. If you keep it all to yourself, you have gained nothing and your success with this program will be limited, at best.

Question: My Green Committee already drives me crazy. I don't need more people knowing everything I do. Why is it necessary to have a Resource Committee?

Answer: Again, the Resource Committee can and should be a valuable asset to you by helping with projects, paperwork, resources, etc.. Remember, the whole point of the ACSP is to let others know what environmental stewards you are and how a well managed golf course can be a benefit to people and wildlife. By finding the right community representatives to be on your Resource Committee, they will learn for themselves the benefits of golf courses and will be more than willing to spread the news.

With board members on your Resource Committee, you will have the opportunity to educate them on various

aspects of your job. As their understanding of your job increases, you will gain valuable support for the projects and programs you want to implement on the golf course.

Question: My membership does not think the New York Audubon should be working on Florida golf courses. They can't seem to get past the New York in the name. What can I say to convince them this is a good program?

Answer: The Audubon staff recognizes that this is a concern for some people, so they have restructured their organization and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program now comes under Audubon International. Audubon International specializes in sustainable resource management.

You can also tell them that this program is sponsored by the United States Golf Association, and has been from the beginning. The ACSP is also supported by groups such as the GCSAA, ASGCA, GCBA, LPGA, PGA, etc.

Besides, I am sure your members do not think the *New York Times* is only a local newspaper either

Question: This ACSP package has been sitting on my desk for months. What is my first step in initiating this program?

Answer: The first thing you need to do after joining the program is to make sure you fill out the Resource Inventory. This form helps you describe your property, the projects you are already involved in, as well as helps identify areas where your

interests may be (birdfeeders, nestboxes, wildlife gardens, etc..)

After completing the Resource Inventory, you need to start thinking about putting together a Resource Committee of persons who will be able to help you with this program.

Next, the Environmental Planning Worksheet takes you through all of the certification categories and should be used as your "map" or "blueprint" of projects you will be working on. This worksheet should constantly be referred to, as it will help you gauge where you are in the program. Then, you should be ready to start implementing projects and applying for certification in the five other categories.

For additional suggestions, be sure to check previous issues of the *Florida Green!*

Question: My golf course is very private and does not want the public on-site. How can we fulfill the public/member involvement category?

Answer: The Audubon staff realizes

that some golf courses are concerned with their privacy. While some courses may have the ability to bring groups of people on-site for tours, this may be the last thing that other courses want.

There are, however, many opportunities to educate your own membership about environmental concerns on and around the golf course. With the average golf course being constructed on 120 - 150 acres, you have plenty of opportunity to enhance and preserve wildlife, conserve and protect water sources, implement IPM programs to minimize chemical and pest pressures as well as reach out to members, their families and guests to help them become more aware of what a benefit a well maintained golf course is to its surrounding environment.

The first thing you should do is let your members know about the ACSP. You can do this by writing an article for your club newsletter, or posting an announcement in the clubhouse or pro shop. You may be pleasantly surprised how

much interest you will receive. Ask for help with projects such as starting a wildlife inventory, building and monitoring nestboxes, or installing a butterfly garden. Your interested members will be glad to help you come up with a list of projects they would like to see implemented on the golf course.

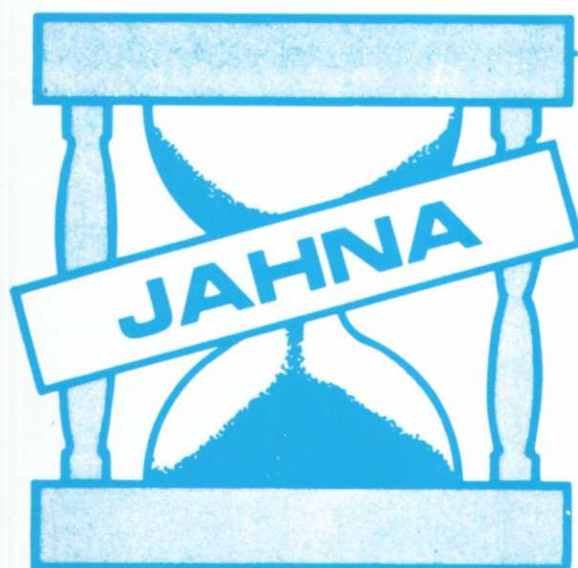
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Question: How many golf courses are registered in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ACSP)?

Answer: As of the end of May, there are over 2160

golf courses who are registered in the program nationwide. Of these, 72 are fully certified, and another 125 have achieved certification in one or more category.

In Florida, over 180 golf courses are currently registered in the program, 10 are fully certified, and another 15 have achieved certification in one or more category.

When you think about Florida having over 1100 golf courses, the number of ACSP members in Florida should be much higher than it is. Call Audubon International today at (518) 767-9051 and ask for membership information.

Other project ideas are:

- Host an Audubon day at your golf course and invite all members.
- Arrange for wildlife demonstrations (a good way to meet community groups who might be willing to serve on your Resource Committee), composting seminars, information that members might utilize in their backyards.
- Offer "kits" to members which might include a nestbox, birdfeeder, butterfly garden plants, etc...
- Have a designated area in your clubhouse or proshop where members can help with a wildlife inventory by listing species that they see while they are out on the course.
- Host mini-seminars or educational workshops for members. Speakers could be from local Audubon chapters, cooperative extensions, garden clubs. Make sure you encourage them to initiate some of the same programs in their own backyards as you are on the golf course.
- Perhaps start a reference library on Florida birds, wildlife, plants, etc. Make these references available for anyone who might want to borrow them.

USGA announces first wildlife links grant

The United States Golf Association (USGA) has awarded three grants totaling approximately \$100,000 to initiate Wildlife Links, golf's first comprehensive program to investigate its relationship with wildlife and its habitat.

The Wildlife Links program was established in early 1995 to fund research, management, and education projects needed to provide the game of golf with state-of-the-art information on wildlife management issues. The USGA will contribute \$100,000 annually for the next three years. The LPGA has also committed funds for this program.

The program is administered by the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) out of Washington, D.C. Congress established NFWF in 1984 as a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of natural resources — fish, wildlife and plants. Among its goals are species habitat protection, environmental education, public-policy development, natural resource management, habitat and ecosystem rehabilitation and restoration, and leadership training for conservation professionals. To date, NFWF

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